

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method for providing queue management and production device
2 status in a distributed environment, comprising:
3 generating a queue interface having user accessible controls for managing
4 production data held in a queue, the production data to be delivered to a
5 production device;
6 presenting the queue interface to a client;
7 generating a status interface for the production device; and
8 presenting the status interface to the client.
- 1 2. The method of Claim 1, further comprising managing the
2 production data in the queue in accordance with instructions entered through the
3 queue interface.
- 1 3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the acts of generating the queue
2 and status interfaces comprise generating the queue and status interfaces each
3 in the form of a web page.
- 1 4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the queue is capable of containing
2 production data directed to more than one production device and wherein the
3 acts of generating and presenting the status interface comprise generating and
4 presenting the status interface for a production device selected through the
5 queue interface.
- 1 5. The method of Claim 1, wherein the acts of generating and
2 presenting the status interface for the production device comprise generating
3 and presenting the status interface once the production data is delivered to the
4 production device.

1 6. The method of Claim 1, wherein the act of presenting the queue
2 and status interfaces comprise generating and presenting a combined
3 queue/status interface.

1 7. The method of Claim 6 wherein:
2 the act of generating the queue interface comprises generating the queue
3 interface in the form of a web page;
4 the act of generating the status interface comprises generating the status
5 interface in the form of a web page; and
6 the act of generating the combined queue/status interface comprises
7 generating the combined queue/status interface in the form of a framed web
8 page.

1 8. A method for mediating access to production devices, comprising:
2 acquiring an access request for a production device;
3 presenting to a client a production interface for the production device, the
4 interface having user accessible controls for selecting production data;
5 placing in a queue production data selected through the production
6 interface;
7 generating a queue interface having user accessible controls for managing
8 the production data in the queue;
9 presenting the queue interface to a client;
10 generating a status interface for the production device; and
11 presenting the status interface to the client.

1 9. The method of Claim 8, wherein the acts of generating the queue
2 and status interfaces comprise generating the queue and status interfaces each
3 in the form of a web page.

1 10. The method of Claim 8, wherein the queue is capable of containing
2 production data directed to more than one production device and wherein the
3 acts of generating and presenting the status interface comprise generating

4 presenting the status interface for a production device selected through the
5 queue interface.

1 11. The method of Claim 8, wherein the acts of generating and
2 presenting the status interface for the production device comprise generating
3 and presenting the status interface once the production data is delivered to the
4 production device.

1 12. The method of Claim 8, wherein the acts of generating and
2 presenting the queue and status interfaces comprise generating and presenting a
3 combined queue/status interface.

1 13. The method of Claim 12 wherein:
2 the act of generating the queue interface comprises generating the queue
3 interface in the form of a web page;
4 the act of generating the status interface comprises generating the status
5 interface in the form of a web page; and
6 the act of generating the combined queue/status interface comprises
7 generating the combined queue/status interface in the form of a framed web
8 page.

1 14. A computer program product for providing queue management and
2 production device status in a distributed environment, the product comprising a
3 computer useable medium having computer readable instructions thereon for:
4 generating a queue interface having user accessible controls for managing
5 production data held in a queue, the production data to be delivered to a
6 production device;
7 presenting the queue interface to a client;
8 generating a status interface for the production device; and
9 presenting the status interface to the client.

1 15. The product of Claim 14, further comprising instructions for
2 managing the production data in the queue in accordance with instructions
3 entered through the queue interface.

1 16. The product of Claim 14, wherein the queue is capable of
2 containing production data directed to more than one production device and
3 wherein the instructions for generating and presenting the status interface
4 comprise instructions for generating presenting the status interface for a
5 production device selected through the queue interface.

1 17. The product of Claim 14, wherein the instructions for generating
2 and presenting the status interface for the production device comprise
3 instructions for generating and presenting the status interface once the
4 production data is delivered to the production device.

1 18. The product of Claim 14, wherein the instructions for presenting
2 the queue and status interfaces comprise instructions for generating and
3 presenting a combined queue/status interface.

1 19. The product of Claim 18 wherein:
2 the instructions for generating the queue interface comprise instructions
3 for generating a queue interface in the form of a web page;
4 the instructions for generating the status interface comprise instructions
5 for generating the status interface in the form of a web page; and
6 the instructions for generating the combined queue/status interface
7 comprises generating the combined queue/status interface in the form of a
8 framed web page.

1 20. A computer program product for mediating access to production
2 devices, the product comprising a computer useable medium having computer
3 readable instructions thereon for:
4 acquiring an access request for a production device;

5 presenting to a client a production interface for the production device, the
6 interface having user accessible controls for selecting production data;
7 placing in a queue production data selected through the production
8 interface.
9 generating a queue interface having user accessible controls for managing
10 the production data in the queue;
11 presenting the queue interface to a client;
12 generating a status interface for the production device; and
13 presenting the status interface to the client.

1 21. The product of Claim 20, wherein the instructions for generating
2 the queue and status interfaces comprise instructions for generating the queue
3 and status interfaces each in the form of a web page.

1 22. The product of Claim 20, wherein the queue is capable of
2 containing production data directed to more than one production device and
3 wherein the instructions for generating and presenting the status interface
4 comprise instructions for generating presenting the status interface for a
5 production device selected through the queue interface.

1 23. The product of Claim 20, wherein the instructions for generating
2 and presenting the status interface for the production device comprise
3 instructions for generating and presenting the status interface once the
4 production data is delivered to the production device.

1 24. The product of Claim 8, wherein the instructions for generating and
2 presenting the queue and status interfaces comprise instructions for generating
3 and presenting a combined queue/status interface.

1 25. The product of Claim 24 wherein:
2 the instructions for generating the queue interface comprise instructions
3 for generating the queue interface in the form of a web page;

4 the instructions for generating the status interface comprise instructions
 5 for generating the status interface in the form of a web page; and
 6 the instructions for generating the combined queue/status interface
 7 comprise instructions for generating the combined queue/status interface in the
 8 form of a framed web page.

1 26. In a computer network, a system for providing queue management
 2 and production device status, the system comprising:
 3 one or more production devices, each production device having a
 4 production server operable to generate a status interface for the particular
 5 production device;
 6 a client operable to display a user interface;
 7 a mediation service in electronic communication with the client and the
 8 production device or devices, the mediation service operable to generate a queue
 9 interface having user accessible controls for managing production data to be
 10 delivered to one or more of the production devices and held in a queue, present
 11 the queue interface to the client, and present to the client the status interface
 12 for a particular production device.

1 27. The system of Claim 26, wherein the mediation service includes a
 2 queue manager operable to manage production data in the queue in accordance
 3 with instructions provided through the queue interface.

1 28. The system of Claim 26, wherein the mediation service includes an
 2 interface generator operable to present to the client the status interface for a
 3 production device identified through the queue interface.

1 29. The system of Claim 28, wherein the interface generator is further
 2 operable to generate and present the queue and status interfaces in the form of
 3 a combined queue/status interface.

30. The system of Claim 29, wherein:
 at least one of the production servers includes a web server operable to
 generate the status queue in the form of a web page associated with a first
 network address; and
 the interface generator of the mediation service functions, at least in part,
 as a web server operable to generate the queue interface in the form of a web
 page associated with a second network address and to present the combined
 queue/status interface in the form of a framed web page having a first frame
 referencing the first network address and a second frame referencing the second
 network address.

31. The system of Claim 26, further comprising an interface generator
 operable to present to the client the status interface for a production device
 once production data is delivered from the queue to that device.

32. In a computer network, a system for providing queue management
 and production device status, the system comprising:
 one or more production devices each having a production server operable
 to generate a status interface and manage production of a target document for a
 particular production device;
 a client operable to issue an access request for a selected production
 device and to display one or more interfaces;
 a queue for storing production data;
 an interface conduit in electronic communication with the client and the
 production server or servers, the interface conduit operable to acquire the
 access request, present to the client a production interface for the production
 device to which the request is directed, and to place in the queue production
 data selected through the production interface;
 a queue manager operable to deliver production data from the queue to
 the production server for the production device to which that production data is
 to be delivered; and

17 an interface generator operable to generate and present to the client a
18 queue interface and to present to the client the status interface for a particular
19 production device.

1 33. The system of Claim 32, wherein the interface generator is further
2 operable to present to the client the status interface for a production device
3 identified through the queue interface.

1 34. The system of Claim 33 wherein the interface generator is further
2 operable to present the queue and status interfaces in the form of a combined
3 queue/status interface.

1 35. The system of Claim 34, wherein:
2 the interface generator and at least one of the production servers each
3 function, at least in part, as a web server;
4 the production server being further operable to generate the status
5 interface in the form of a web page associated with a first network address;
6 and
7 the interface generator being further operable to generate the queue
8 interface in the form of a web page associated with a second network address
9 and to present the combined queue/status interface in the form of a framed web
10 page referencing the first and second network addresses.

1 36. The system of Claim 32, wherein the interface generator is further
2 operable to present the status interface for that production device once that
3 production data is delivered.

1 37. The system of Claim 36, wherein:
2 the interface generator and at least one of the production servers function
3 at least in part as web servers;
4 the production server being further operable to generate the status
5 interface in the form of a first web page; and

6 the interface generator being further operable to generate the queue
7 interface in the form of a second web page.

1 38. The system of Claim 32, wherein the queue manager is further
2 operable to manage production data in the queue in accordance with instructions
3 provided through the queue interface.